ARUBA TODAY®

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Aruba Today's Special edition:

Aruba celebrates 50 years of our Anthem and Flag

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The flourishing hearth: How micro-bakeries are kneading communities together

FORT MILL, SC — In the quiet hours of 3:00 a.m., while the rest of the neighborhood sleeps, Marcelle Malkin's basement is alive with the rhythmic slapping of dough against flour-dusted counters. The air is thick with the earthy, tangy scent of fermenting sourdough.

For Malkin, the founder of Fort Mill Sourdough Co., this isn't just a side hobby it's a thriving enterprise that has become a cornerstone of her local community.

Malkin is part of a "micro-bakery" revolution sweeping the United States. As of early 2026, these home-based businesses are no longer just pandemic-era experiments; they have matured into a sophisticated industry that is reshaping local economies and redefining the American dream for thousands of families.

Marcelle Malkin

From Passion to Purpose

The story of Fort Mill Sourdough began with a personal need. When Malkin's middle child struggled with severe eczema, she sought a healthier, gut-friendly alternative to mass-produced bread. Naturally fermented sourdough, with its lower gluten content and absence of additives, was the answer. What started as a way to nourish her own family quickly caught the attention of neighbors.

Today, Malkin's basement operation produces over 400 loaves a week, distributed across 11 retail locations in the Charlotte, N.C. metro area. Her success has allowed her to hire five part-time employees and, as of late 2025, transition to a four-day baking schedule to prioritize homeschooling her children.

"It's about more than bread," Malkin shared in a recent community update. "It's a way of life that lets me be present for my family while providing something wholesome for my neighbors".

The 2026 "Cottage Food" Revolution

The explosion of micro-bakeries is not accidental. It is fueled by a massive wave of legislative reform across the country. In 2025 alone, 36 bills were introduced in 21 states to expand "food freedom".

Texas: As of late 2025, new laws allow home bakers to sell refrigerated goods and hot foods, effectively turning home kitchens into neighborhood bistros.

Michigan & Georgia: Recent 2026 legislation has either raised or entirely removed sales caps, allowing home entrepreneurs to scale their businesses to six-figure revenues without the crushing overhead of commercial real estate.

Florida: New "food freedom" bills passed in March 2026 allow vendors to sell a wider variety of prepared goods, including certain meat products and produce, directly to consumers.

These legal shifts have broken the "refrigeration barrier," allowing micro-bakers to move beyond simple bread into artisanal pastries, cheesecakes, and savory bakes that were previously off-limits in a home setting.❑

U.S. to slash fee for renouncing citizenship

Washington, United States

The United States will drop the price for Americans looking to formally renounce their citizenship by more than 80 percent, a move welcomed by the "Accidental Americans" struggling with the US tax system. Consular fees for renouncing US citizenship will be reduced from $2,350 to $450 starting April 13, according to a notice in the Federal Register, the US government's official journal. The move reverses a 2015 price hike and returns the fee to the level when it was introduced in 2010. The decision was made after taking into account "the not insignificant anecdotal evidence regarding tax-related difficulties many U.S. nationals residing abroad encounter," according to the notice published on Friday. The Association of Accidental Americans (AAA), a non-profit based in Paris, welcomed the decision and said it was the "direct result" of legal action and advocacy. "This fee reduction is a concrete first victory," AAA founder and president Fabien Lehagre said in a statement on social media.❑

In this photo illustration, the sex marker for a male is shown on a U.S. passport on November 06, 2025 in San Anselmo, California.

Beyond the Screen: How school phone bans are fueling a literacy renaissance

LOUISVILLE, KY — For the better part of a decade, the typical American high school hallway during passing periods or lunch was a study in digital isolation. The traditional cacophony of teenage life had been replaced by a ghostly silence, broken only by the mechanical hum of lockers and the soft, rhythmic tapping of thumbs on glass. Students moved in "digital bubbles," their attention tethered to TikTok algorithms and group chats.

However, at Ballard High School in Kentucky, a different sound has returned this year: the audible rustle of turning pages, the scraping of chairs as students huddle over shared texts, and a lively, decibel-shattering hum of students actually talking to one another.

Following a strict "bell-to-bell" cellphone ban implemented for the 2025-2026 school year, schools in the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) district are reporting a stunning and largely unforeseen side effect: a massive surge in student literacy and library engagement. It appears that when the digital world is stripped away, students are hungry for a different kind of connection one found in the stacks of their school libraries.

Mark Twain Middle School Principal Matthew Mough speaks during an interview about the school's smartphone ban in Alexandria, Virginia, on March 6, 2025, while holding the locking

The "Ballard effect"

At Ballard High School, the transformation was almost immediate. Within the first month of the ban, library book checkouts skyrocketed by 67% compared to the same period the previous year. In August 2025 alone, students borrowed 891 books, up from 533 the year before. This isn't just a minor statistical blip; it represents a fundamental shift in how students occupy their downtime.

"They weren't talking to me about books before because their heads were always down," said Stephanie Conrad, Ballard's veteran librarian. "Now, I'm having those deep, meaningful conversations again about genres they like, authors they've discovered on their own, or recommendations for their friends. It's like they've rediscovered the library as a destination rather than just a place to charge their phones."

The trend isn't isolated to a single campus. Across the district, the numbers tell a consistent story of a "literacy renaissance" born out of boredom and the need for engagement:

Waggener High School: Recorded 1,069 checkouts in August, a staggering jump from just 232 the previous year.

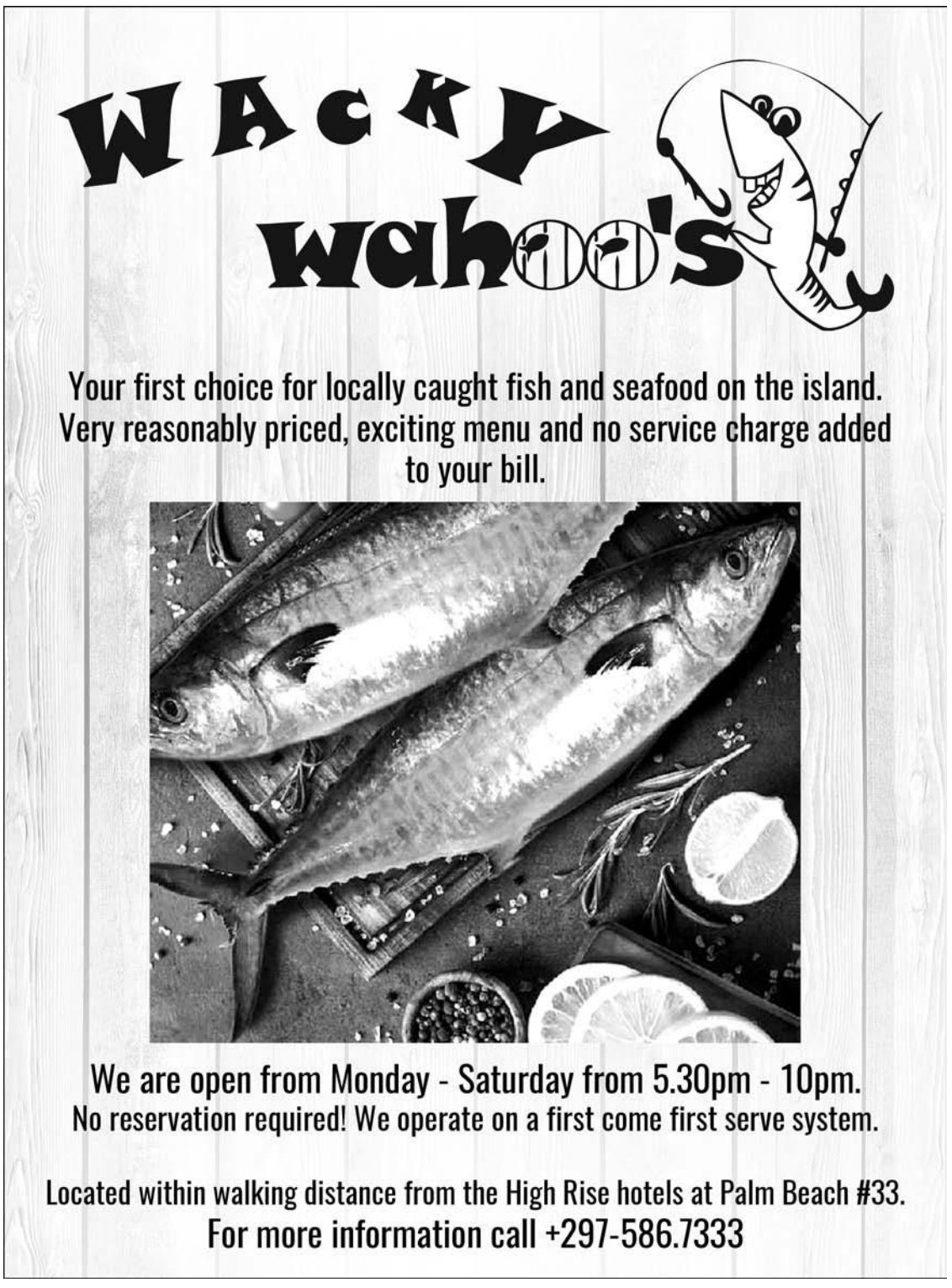
Central High School: Saw 857 checkouts, more than doubling its previous August total of 341.

Butler High School: Reported that 40% of its entire student body currently has a book checked outdouble the engagement rate of the entire previous school year combined.

A growing national movement

The success in Kentucky arrives as a massive policy shift sweeps across the United States. As of early 2026, nearly 37 states have passed laws or issued formal guidance requiring districts to curb phone usage to combat "digital distraction" and rising rates of cyberbullying. According to the latest data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), roughly 77% of U.S. public schools now prohibit non-academic phone use during school hours.

The push for these policies gained momentum after a series of alarming reports. Last year, 53% of school leaders reported that mobile devices were actively harming academic performance and contributing to a "crisis of attention." While the initial goal was simply to improve focus in the classroom, the extracurricular benefits specifically in reading have caught many educators by surprise.❑



Jessie Buckley: From reality TV hopeful to Oscar winner

Dublin, Ireland
Irish actress Jessie Buckley capped her spectacular rise to Hollywood stardom on Sunday, winning a best actress Oscar for her searing portrait of motherhood and love undone by loss in "Hamnet" .
The 36-year-old actress from a small town in Ireland's remote southwest received the award for her work as William Shakespeare's wife Agnes, devastated by the death of their son, the eponymous child in director Chloe Zhao's acclaimed film.
Her expressive intensity as the grieving heart of the story an adaptation of Maggie O'Farrell's 2020 bestselling novel of the same name captivated audiences, moving many moviegoers to tears.
"This is really something," an emotional Buckley said, hailing her fellow nominees and saying she wanted to work with all of them.
The bewitching Agnes has "a strong, wide open heart and a mother with an epic landscape inside her", Buckley told The Irish Times, underscoring the emotional depth of the role.
In February, on becoming the first Irish woman to win a BAFTA best actress award for her performance, she dedicated it to "the women past, present and future that have taught me and continue to teach me how to do it differently".

Irish actress Jessie Buckley holds her Oscar for Best Actress in a Leading Role for "Hamnet" as she attends the Vanity Fair Oscar Party at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in Los Angeles on March 15, 2026.

"You brought the mother out of the shadows, and you stood her in absolution beside the giant that is Shakespeare", she said to O'Farrell in the audience.
Buckley was the closest thing to a shoo-in this awards season, sweeping the precursor prizes including the Golden Globe and Critics Choice Awards.
On Sunday, she bested Rose Byrne ("If I Had Legs I'd Kick You"), Renate Reinsve ("Sentimental Value"), Emma Stone ("Bugonia") and Kate Hudson ("Song Sung Blue").
Irish President Catherine Connolly sent Buckley her "warmest congratulations" on Monday on the "historic moment of becoming the first Irish woman to win the Oscar for best actress.
She also praised the achievements of all the other Irish nominees and Richard Baneham who won his second Oscar for visual effects.
Buckley didn't have a child when she took on the role of Agnes.
But she became pregnant "a week" after finishing "Hamnet", she told The New York Times, and gave birth to a baby girl in autumn 2025.

'Nurtured and respected'
Born on December 28, 1989 to a poet, Tim Buckley, and Marina, a former opera singer and vocal coach, the actress was encouraged to join school theatre productions from a young age.
Growing up in Killarney, County Kerry with four siblings, she credits her upbringing for shaping her artistic instincts.
At home, "music, writing and expressing yourself was really nurtured and respected," she told The Irish Times.
Buckley first made waves as a reality TV hopeful in 2008's "I'd Do Anything", a BBC talent show scouting for a production of "Oliver" in London's West End.
Although she lost in the final, judges urged her to pursue formal dramatic training.
She graduated from London's prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 2013 and immersed herself in the works of The Bard.
That same year, she secured roles in adaptations of "Henry V" and "The Winter's Tale" in London.
Television roles followed including in a BBC dramatisation of "War and Peace" (2016), and the HBO hit miniseries "Chernobyl" (2019).
Buckley made her film debut in "Beast" (2017), a psychological thriller set on Jersey in the Channel Islands, and earned a BAFTA nomination for her lead role in the 2018 film "Wild Rose" about an aspiring country singer and ex-convict from Glasgow.

She has often returned to her Shakespearean theatrical roots, playing Juliet at the National Theatre in 2021 with another rising star, Josh O'Connor.
She earned her first Oscar nomination in 2022 for best supporting actress for her portrayal of a tormented mother in Maggie Gyllenhaal's tense psychological drama "The Lost Daughter".❑

'Buffy' reboot cancelled: Sarah Michelle Gellar

Los Angeles, United States
A planned reboot "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," that was set to be directed by Oscar-winning director Chloe Zhao, has been canceled, star and producer Sarah Michelle Gellar said.
"Unfortunately, Hulu has decided not to move forward with 'Buffy: New Sunnydale'," Gellar said in a weekend Instagram post.
"I am really sad to have to share this, but I wanted you all to hear it from me," added the 48-year-old, who starred in the original series that ran for seven seasons.
The new Buffy was announced last year and was set to see Gellar reprise her role as Buffy Summers, who in the original series had been a teenager battling demons and vampires as she navigated high school.

"I want to thank Chloe Zhao, because I never thought I would find myself back in Buffy's stylish yet affordable boots," Gellar said.
"Thanks to Chloe, I was reminded how much I love her and how much she means not only to me but to all of you. And this doesn't change any of that.
"And I promise if the apocalypse actually comes, you can still beep me," she quipped.
Zhao, whose period piece "Hamnet" missed out on the best picture Oscar on Sunday, told Variety on the red carpet that she hadn't been surprised by the project's cancellation.

Sarah Michelle Gellar attends "Ready Or Not 2: Here I Come" at SXSW 2026 on March 13, 2026 in Austin, Texas.

"Things happen for a reason," Zhao said.
"I had an incredible time with Sarah, with the whole cast and crew doing this and we, first and foremost, see ourselves as the guardians of the original show.
"Our priority has always been to be truthful to the show, and be truthful to our fans."❑

Chinese firms seek to loosen West's grip on lucrative snow business

Beijing, China

Lianhuashan's slopes have been kept snow-covered by ageing European snow cannons for more than 20 years, but the Beijing resort added its first Chinese snowmaker this ski season.

The snow gun, made by Beijing-based Carving Ski, costs about a third less than Western brands such as Italian giant TechnoAlpin, Carving resort manager Tang Lingling told AFP on a crisp February morning at the bottom of the slopes.

"By producing and assembling locally, we avoid the high costs of overseas production and shipping," said Tang, whose company sold around 200 snow machines last year.

This picture taken on February 16, 2026 shows a visitor standing next to a snowman beside the downhill slopes at Lianhuashan Ski Resort on the outskirts of Beijing.

"But the pressure from competition is very great."

"The truth is, the profit margin for our snow machine business isn't high."

However, Chinese winter sports firms are slowly chipping away at foreign dominance in the 84.6 billion yuan ($12.3 billion) snow equipment market despite such ferocious price competition.

They aim to replace foreign brands at home before conquering overseas markets by investing in research and making use of China's formidable supply chains.

- Targeting the masses -

China's snow-related equipment sales have surged almost fourfold since 2015, but interest has levelled off since the Beijing Winter Olympic Games in 2022 and a post-Covid boom.

Chinese consumers are now tightening their belts.

"Since 2007, the price of raw materials has at least doubled... but we haven't raised our prices," said Jin Huiyuan, founder of snowboard brand Lidakis.

Her company targets beginners and children with social media-friendly, ultralight boards with detachable dolls that she sells for around 2,000 yuan ($290) each.

They sold around 20,000 boards last year out of their frigid warehouse in Zhangjiakou, close to the slopes used for the 2022 Winter Games.

"Big foreign brands are high-end brands, which are bought by the rich; ours is for the masses. So, on this point, I think we are competitive with them, since not every consumer has lots of money," Jin said.

- Olympic void -

The government has heavily supported this "ice and snow economy", with President Xi Jinping's goal of 300 million winter sports participants surpassed by 2022.

Companies such as Carving and Lidakis benefit from research funding and subsidised rents.

Still, foreign brands dominate the high-end market.

Domestic skis and boards "haven't reached the level" of international competitors, according to Li Zhibo, general manager of ski firm Qianmao Xuelong.❑

The beginning of the end: Single-dose pill could finally eradicate sleeping sickness

GENEVA / KINSHASA — For over a century, the parasitic disease known as "sleeping sickness" has been a death sentence for thousands across sub-Saharan Africa. Characterized by a relentless progression from fever to neurological collapse, the disease was immortalized in literature as a "nightmare" of the tsetse fly. However, a breakthrough medical milestone announced this year has shifted the narrative from containment to complete elimination.

In late February 2026, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) issued a landmark positive scientific opinion for acoziborole, the first single-dose oral treatment for human African trypanosomiasis (HAT). This decision, fast-tracked under the EU-Medicines for All (EU-M4all) program, paves the way for the drug's rapid registration in endemic countries, signaling what health experts call the "beginning of the end" for the ancient scourge.

A medical revolution in three pills

Unlike any treatment before it, acoziborole requires only a single dose of three pills swallowed at once. For the millions living in remote, rural areas of Central and West Africa, this is transformative.

Historically, treating sleeping sickness was a grueling ordeal. Early 20th-century drugs were arsenic-based and often as lethal as the disease itself, famously described as "fire in the veins". Even recent advancements like fexinidazole required a 10-day regimen of multiple daily doses, often demanding hospitalization to ensure compliance and monitor side effects.❑

Prisca Dali,14, who was diagnosed with Human African Trypanosomiasis after being ill for 4 years, has her blood drawn during an Human African Trypanosomiasis, also known as sleeping sickness, screening in the village of Paanenefla near Sinfra, Ivory Coast on October 11, 2019.

‘It’s adrenaline’: Ukraine amputee veterans climb for recovery

Kyiv, Ukraine
Energetic pop music blasted from speakers at a modern climbing gym in Kyiv as Ukrainian veterans stood at the foot of the wall doing burpees and crab walks, resistance bands looped around their prosthetic legs.
The men were wounded at the front fighting off the Russian invasion, which has now dragged into its fifth year and is seeing casualties mount every day.

Tens of thousands of wounded veterans are readjusting to civilian life, finding solace in the host of activities and communities popping up to cater to their growing numbers.
“It’s scary, it’s interesting, it’s adrenaline, it’s an unusual kind of physical exertion,” Oleg Khmylevskyi, a muscular 38-year-old who lost his right leg at the front, told AFP.
The men adjusted their harnesses before setting off to tackle the overhangs, latching on to colourful holds as they worked their way up.

According to the National Health Service of Ukraine, by early 2025, about 95,000 amputations had been performed since the invasion began.
Ukraine does not routinely disclose its total number of wounded soldiers, arguing Russia would benefit from such information. In late 2024, President Volodymyr Zelensky put the number at 370,000.
Ex-soldiers with missing limbs are often seen in the streets of Kyiv in military fatigues and on crutches.
According to a December survey by the Rating Group pollster, more than three-quarters of veterans said they feared a lack of understanding among society, and a similar number worried about the lack of inclusive spaces.

A former Ukrainian service member, who was injured in the war against Russia and now has a prosthetic leg, takes part in an indoor climbing session at Climbing SPACE in Kyiv on February 26, 2026, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

- ‘Fear and adrenaline’ -
With his shaved head, neatly trimmed beard and piercing gaze, Khmylevskyi recounted how he drove to Kyiv to join the fight with a friend in the first days of the invasion.
“The two of us had, almost like in a movie... two helmets, two bulletproof vests and a samurai sword,” he said, chuckling.
Khmylevskyi is an entrepreneur but three in four veterans said finding a job was a problem they worried about after being discharged from the army.
Six months into the war, he stepped on a mine in a forest in the eastern Lugansk region.
He embarked on a day-long trek from the closest Ukrainian position, refusing strong painkillers so he could check and readjust the tourniquets tight bandages that stop massive bleeding.
He credits the ordeal with saving his knee and avoiding a full leg amputation.
Climbing now gives him a dose of “pleasant fear and adrenaline”, he told AFP.
That mix can help veterans with their recovery, said Oleksandr Pedan, a Ukrainian TV host and activist who founded a club called “Second Wind” to get veterans hiking, rafting and climbing.
“Military veterans after combat also need adrenaline, and heights give you adrenaline,” Pedan told AFP.
Climbing helped them feel “alive, energetic, athletic” again and has “turned out to be an extremely powerful tool for rehabilitation and reintegration”.❑

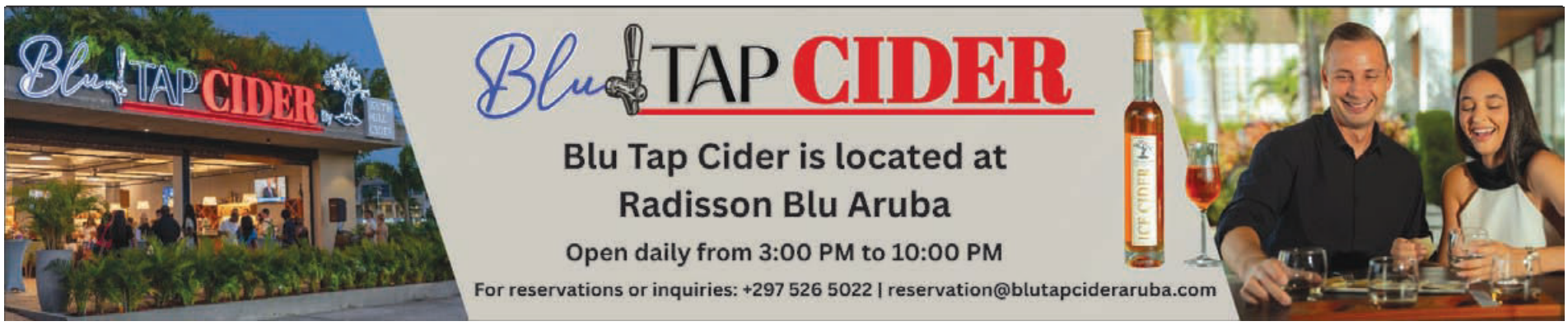
New ‘Wuthering Heights’ film unleashes fresh wave of Bronte-mania

Haworth, United Kingdom
Perched on the edge of the rugged Yorkshire moors that inspired Emily Bronte to write her masterpiece “Wuthering Heights”, the quaint village of Haworth has long been a place of literary pilgrimage.

Now the latest big-screen adaptation of her classic 1847 novel starring Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi and with a Charli XCX soundtrack is drawing a fresh influx of visitors.
It was here that Emily and her sisters, Charlotte and Anne, lived and wrote.
More than 150 years after the sisters’ deaths, “the world is still fascinated with their stories,” said Canadian retiree Nancy Marto, adding that being able to visit Haworth was “a dream come true”.
“I think the fact that there is a new version of ‘Wuthering Heights’... speaks to the power of these authors, to Emily, but also to her sisters,” she said.
Two weeks after the release of the film, picturesque Haworth in northwest England with its narrow, cobbled streets and small stone houses, is packed.
The film, loosely based on the book, was one of the most anticipated of the year.
At the heart of the plot is the passionate relationship between Heathcliff, a boy of mysterious origins taken in by the wealthy Mr Earnshaw and his daughter Catherine.
The moors, battered by the elements, play a central role in the novel, as well as in Emerald Fennell’s film.

The dining room in the Bronte Parsonage Museum where Charlotte, Emily and Anne Bronte wrote their famous novels, including ‘Wuthering Heights’, is pictured in the village centre of Haworth, northern England on February 25, 2026.

- ‘Completely besotted’ -
Johnnie Brigg, a local tour guide, has been inundated with requests in recent weeks.
“They want to come here and experience the Brontes, the moor, and find their own interpretation of Emily,” he said.
The film would attract a “whole new generation of people” who had not yet read the book but were “completely besotted” after seeing the film, he added.
The parsonage between the village and the moors where the Brontes lived with their clergyman father and brother, Branwell, is now a museum dedicated to their memory.
Emily’s sister Charlotte also wrote “Jane Eyre” here, another classic of English literature.
The museum’s Mia Ferullo, who has been giving talks on “Bronte-mania” for the past fortnight, said “so many people” were “picking up the book for the first time” as a result of the film.
Museum director Rebecca Yorke said 500 people of all ages and backgrounds visited on one Saturday.❑



Aruba celebrates its culture and identity with different activities around the island

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is preparing to celebrate its national day by honoring the island's identity, traditions, and national pride through a wide range of community events. The cultural calendar is filled with activities celebrating Aruba's Anthem and Flag Day.

This year's calendar is especially significant as the island commemorates 50 years of the National Anthem and Flag and 40 years of Status Aparte, bringing together residents, artists, families, and cultural organizations to celebrate Aruba's heritage.

The celebrations began at the start of March and continue throughout the entire month with events where citizens can enjoy music, art, food, and sports in various districts across the island. Today the festivities continue as Aruba comes together for a series of cultural and commemorative events organized in anticipation of the national holiday.

Tonight the Protocol Ceremony will take place at the Plaza 18 di Maart Monument, during which tribute will be paid to the national symbols.

As is customary, tonight Aruba will also enjoy the Cultural Manifestation at Carnival Village, where music, dance, and artistic performances showcase the island's traditions. The evening will also include a special tribute to Julio B. Euson, an influential cultural figure whose work helped shape Aruba's artistic landscape.

On March 18, Aruba will be filled with celebrations, and as tradition dictates, citizens will be able to enjoy various events across the island.

The day will begin with the official protocol ceremony, which this year will take place in front of the Cocolishi government building and will include an official visit from His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, who during the day will visit different locations around the island.

Throughout the day, institutions and community centers will present special programs honoring Aruba's national identity. Cultural events will take place at locations such as the National Library of Aruba, the National Archaeological Museum of Aruba, and Cas di Cultura.

Visitors will be able to enjoy art markets, cultural performances, and historical exhibitions dedicated to the

island's heritage.

Several community centers will also host their own celebrations, including Centro di Bario Brazil, Centro di Bario Noord, and Centro di Bario Playa Pabao. These events will feature traditional food, music, and cultural activities to bring families together in celebration of Aruban identity.

Sports and recreational activities will also be part of the festivities. At Governor's Bay Beach there will be the traditional miniature boat race, along with a Bolas Criollas tournament and other traditional games.

In the evening, the celebrations will continue with artistic performances and entertainment. Events such as "Canta, Celebra y Hisa Nos Bandera" at Renaissance Marketplace and "Raiz di Nos Isla – Celebrating the National Day of Our Flag" at Paseo Herencia Mall will bring music, culture, and community spirit.

The celebrations of March 17 and 18 highlight the unity and pride of the Aruban people, celebrating Aruba's heritage, culture, and national identity.

Check out the schedule for the celebratory itinerary!

"Aruba Dushi Tera" – From an instinct of preservation to a symbol of autonomy

(Oranjestad)—In 1951, Rufo Wever and Padu Lampe decided to record a record with the intention of beginning to preserve and promote the typical rhythms and melodies of Aruba. This became a major contribution to preserving rhythms such as the waltz and the tumba.

In 1952, Lampe and Wever wanted to compose a song to express the love of our people for Aruba and to generate patriotic feelings among our citizens. In just one day, they produced the song that became "Aruba Dushi Tera." In 1952, Aruba Dushi Tera consisted of only two verses. The first verse speaks about the values and character of Aruba; the second speaks about its nature and national symbols; and the last addresses the qualities of the people of Aruba. The song is written in the rhythm of a moderate waltz.

Thanks to "De Trupialen," under the guidance of Frere Alexius, the song gained popularity, and in a short time it was even used during official government occasions. Eventually, Radio Kelkboom recorded and released a record of Aruba Dushi Tera, sung by De Trupialen and accompanied on piano by Padu Lampe.
All of this took place within the context of the struggle of the Aruban people to establish their own identity and obtain greater political freedom. The Government of Aruba at that time decided that Aruba, in addition to its own coat of arms, should also have its own national anthem and national flag.

On February 25, 1976, a commission that evaluated whether Aruba Dushi Tera should be implemented as the national anthem delivered its recommendation, and on March 16, 1976, the Parliament of Aruba approved Aruba Dushi Tera as Aruba's official national anthem. That year, one more verse was added to the anthem by Hubert Lio Booi.

On March 18, 1976, during the official proclamation of our anthem and flag, it was the first time that Aruba Dushi Tera was heard as our official anthem, giving a voice, a rhythm, and a melody to the identity of our island.

Aruba to me: Don Alhart celebrates Aruba's Flag Day at home in NY!

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page!
Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Don Alhart from New York, USA. He wrote to us saying:

"*Aruba to me is honoring Aruba at home during Flag Day.*
My Aruba flag is flying in the snow in New York State while my wife Mary and I are enjoying the sunshine here in Aruba."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!

A Short History of how Aruba got its 'Status Aparte'

(Oranjestad)—The history of how Aruba achieved its Status Aparte is one that witnessed many changes, impasses, polarization, and the continuous efforts of several political figures on the island. We cannot cover everything on this page, but we can recall some of the decisive moments that shaped the path for Aruba to reach its autonomy.

The first call for autonomy

It is important to note that the calls during the 40 years of our struggle for autonomy always came in response to developments on our island, whether positive or negative. The first call came from Jan Hendrik Albert Eman (Henny Sr.) during the years around 1948.

At that time Curaçao was

the central government where all decisions for the islands of the Netherlands Antilles were made. During this period Aruba experienced high unemployment—forcing many citizens to look for work on other islands in the Caribbean—and high child mortality.

When Henny Sr. became a member of the Landraad (nation's council), the situation improved. LAGO and the refinery in Eagle established themselves and many jobs became available. Aruba was generating more revenue but did not have the autonomy to manage it. This is where the first call for autonomy was born.

Although Henny Sr. was certainly not the only voice that played a role during the years around 1948, his focus and continuous efforts during this period earned him the title of "The Founder."

It was on March 18, 1948 that Aruba received support at the Round Table Conference, marking an immortal date in the struggle for Status Aparte. However, the struggle soon stalled after the Netherlands formed a new cabinet following the Second World War.

Although Queen Wilhelmina had promised that the islands in the Antilles would receive autonomy after the war, the new cabinet introduced drastic changes in the relationships between the Netherlands and its colonies. T

he changes were mainly directed at addressing the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia, but the consequences were also significant for the Antilles and Suriname. The new Dutch cabinet canceled important legislation (ontwerp-Grondswet) that had been based on the resolutions made during the Round Table Conference. This was a heavy blow for Aruba.

During the 1950s and 1960s the struggle quieted considerably, as Aruba's economic situation was suffering.

Betico leads the fight to the end

During the 1970s, the struggle for autonomy was renewed. The call for independence returned to the agenda after an incident in Curaçao where the Netherlands had to deploy the army to restore public order. This led Dutch politicians to believe that the Netherlands could no longer continue carrying the responsibility and should grant independence to the Antilles and Suriname as soon as possible.

In 1971, Betico Croes and his party MEP became key figures in matters of constitutional relations.

In 1972, consensus was reached in Aruba regarding constitutional relations after MEP, AVP, and PPA rejected joining an Antillean federation that would have placed Aruba in an inferior position compared to Curaçao.

In 1982, a decisive movement was reached in the path toward Status Aparte, when—at the insistence of AVP—an agreement was signed for a national central government.

In 1983, approval was given to amend the statute to grant Aruba Status Aparte, which the Netherlands and MEP had set conditions on. MEP agreed that Status Aparte would take effect on January 1, 1986.

At the same time, Betico Croes still had the goal of achieving independence, but since he had signed for Status Aparte, he stepped back and allowed the people to decide whether to maintain it or continue the struggle for independence. In a referendum, the people voted to maintain Status Aparte.

"It was truly a struggle with sweat, blood and tears"

Without Betico's help, the struggle might have ended during the 1970s. Through his continuous efforts, Betico instilled patriotic love in the Aruban people. It was Betico who introduced our national symbols: the flag and the anthem.

Unfortunately, the leader of MEP did not live to see the fruits of his work. Just before the implementation of Status Aparte, Betico Croes suffered a serious accident. In November 1986, he passed away. To this day, Betico Croes is commemorated every year as our Liberator.

History of Our Flag

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's flag came much later, after Aruba had already obtained its coat of arms and an anthem it could call its own. At the suggestion of the Island Government of Aruba, a commission was appointed in 1976 consisting of Julio Maduro, former head of the Department of Labor Affairs; Wouter van Romondt, former art teacher at Colegio Arubano; Ronald Donk; and Juan E. Wever as secretary. Their task was to organize a public competition for a flag design.

In total, 693 designs were submitted to the commission. Some design elements stood out during the evaluation. Many contributors, mostly schoolchildren, wanted to see a four-pointed star. A number of people also opted for horizontal or vertical colored stripes.

The dominant colors were red, white, blue, and yellow. Although contributors helped establish the colors and elements of the flag, none of the submitted designs received final approval. With the help of an American expert from the Flag Research Institute in Boston named Whitney Smith, the flag we know today was developed. The commission asked the expert to create another design that would incorporate the colors, meanings, and values suggested by the local contributors.

On March 16, 1976, the same day the national anthem was approved, the Parliament of Aruba approved the final design, which became the official flag of Aruba.

On March 18, the flag was raised for the first time during a ceremony inaugurating the anthem and flag at Wilhelmina Stadium. The national flag had been officially adopted on that date in 1976.

Meaning of the Flag

Blue color:
The blue color of our flag represents the vast sea that surrounds the island. Some sources say the shade of blue (Pantone 279 C) was specifically chosen to match the blue used in the United Nations flag. The color symbolizes the ocean and Aruba's connection to it.

Yellow stripes:
The flag expresses a desire for sovereignty and independence from others while not isolating itself from the surrounding world. This is represented by the horizontal yellow stripes, which indicate Aruba's free position in the blue sea that surrounds it.
The yellow color also refers to Aruba's industries such as aloe, gold, and tourism, which have historically been important sources of income for the Aruban people. It also represents plants that bloom yellow, such as Kibrahacha, Brazil, Bonchi di Strena, Aloe, and Wanglo.

Four-pointed star:
The four points of the star represent the four directions of the compass. In addition, it symbolizes the directions from which immigrants from more than 40 countries have come and now live together in harmony on our island.
The four-pointed star also refers to the maritime and air directions from which Aruba's economy flows, including where our largest economic pillar—tourism—comes from.

The red color of the star represents the blood of our indigenous ancestors and pays tribute to the sacrifices made during battles such as the one at Rooi Frances (Frenchman's Pass).

The white outline around the star represents the white sand of our beaches and the purity of the Aruban people, who respect justice, order, and freedom.

The First Celebrations of the Anthem and Flag

(Oranjestad)—This year, Aruba is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its Anthem and Flag. The first time Aruba raised its flag and sang its national anthem in 1976 was an extremely important occasion for the identity and history of our country. How was this celebrated?

The first celebration on March 18 began with a walk that ended at the stadium—at that time called Wilhelmina Stadium, now Guillermo Prospero Trinidad Stadium—where everyone gathered to raise the flag and sing the national anthem officially for the first time.

The master of ceremonies was Mr. Tico Kuiperi. The choir of Maybeline Arends sang the anthem, while the young Anthony Croes and Angelique Croes raised the flag.

Anthony and Angelique, together with the scouts, practiced for several days on how to raise the flag properly in order to follow all protocol and show respect for the national symbol.

Police estimates indicated that around 10,000 people were present at the stadium to witness this historic moment.

Photographs show the magnitude of the celebrations and the expressions of national pride among everyone who witnessed the birth of our country's autonomy.

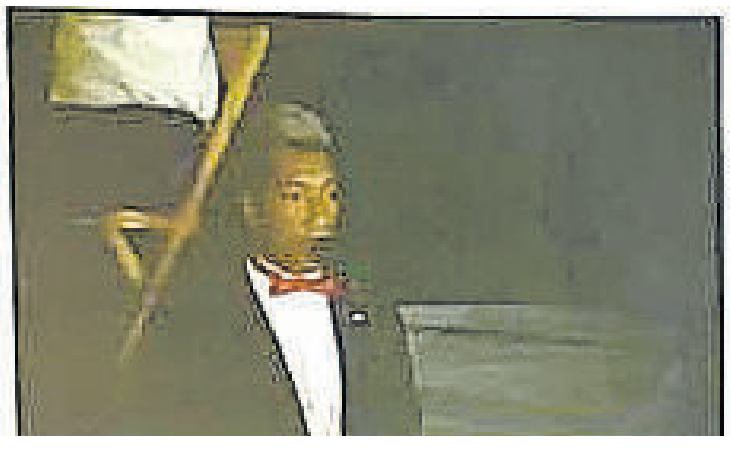
At the Arubiana-Caribiana Department, and in the online archive of the National Library, many photos and pieces of information about this historic ceremony can be found.

Inaugural Ceremony of Status Aparte

Aruban musician Etty Toppenberg sang the national anthem for the first time during the inaugural ceremony of Status Aparte. Edward Alexander "Etty" Toppenberg played an important role on January 1, 1986. That day marked the beginning of Aruba as an autonomous country. Etty, then 41 years old, sang the national anthem of Aruba at the moment when the Netherlands Antilles flag was lowered and the sovereign flag of Aruba was raised.

In a 2006 interview with Bon Dia Aruba, Toppenberg said he felt deeply honored when he was asked to sing the national anthem during the New Year moment that introduced Status Aparte.

"A very, very great honor, and I felt like I was almost singing with tears in my eyes. My whole family was there—my father, even my mother—and all my friends were there. They all left their New Year celebrations at home to go in front of the government building to see how great the ceremony was," he said.



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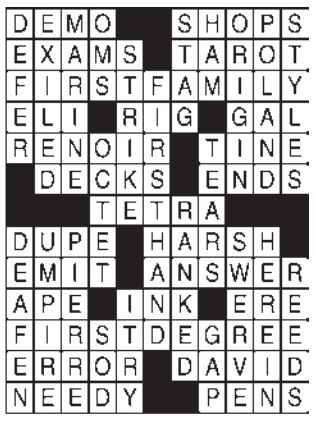
ARUBA TODAY

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

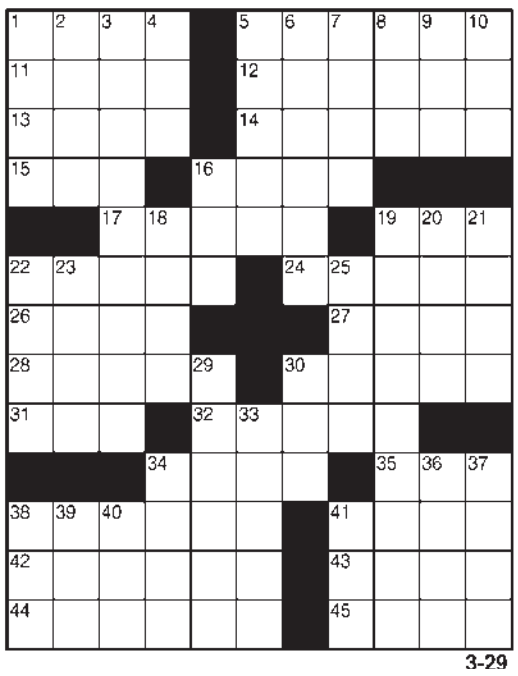


ACROSS

1 Informal farewell
5 Collect $200, maybe
11 Final, e.g.
12 Reverberated
13 Marina spot
14 Worn down
15 — Aviv
16 State frankly
17 Diamond corners
19 Newsstand buy, for short
22 Crab's place
24 Hackneyed
26 St. Louis sight
27 Mob event
28 Gags
30 Stately dance
31 Braying beast
32 Witty remarks
34 Crooned
35 Diving bird
38 Speculative question
41 Lot unit
42 Pal of Pooh
43 Onion layer
44 Made tea
45 Sibilant summons

DOWN

1 Final, e.g.
2 Car bar
3 Members of the offense
4 Band blaster
5 Irritate
6 Clue heading
7 Display
8 Grassy clump
9 "Golly!"
10 Strange
16 Cigar bit
18 Ibuprofen target
19 They hold letters
20 Scads
21 Stan of jazz
22 Mexican peninsula
23 Amorous archer
25 Snare
29 Knight's attendant
30 Costume part
33 Hungry, probably
34 Put away
36 "Exodus" author
37 Lane's co-worker
38 Fly catcher
39 That woman
40 Pro vote
41 Pharaoh's symbol



3-29

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-29 CRYPTOQUOTE

V O L F H Y H H M H Y N S W H R D K D C T F H B T H N D B ' L Q H L S U H L F H Y, X H H E W H V B C S A Y F H D Y L; V ' J J R L D C L F H Y H O S Y H M H Y. — D . D . W V J B H

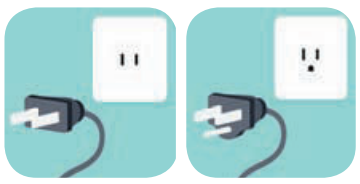
Cryptoquote: I ONLY HOPE THAT WE NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF ONE THING — THAT IT ALL STARTED WITH A MOUSE. — WALT DISNEY

Cruise ship Schedule: March 16 - 22 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	16	VALIANT LADY	09.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	17	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	22.30	C	1
WED	18	ROTTERDAM	08.00	17.00	B	1
		BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
THU	19	MSC DIVINA	08.00	18.00	B	1
		AZAMARA QUEST	09.30	22.00	C	1
FRI	20	CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN STAR	11.00	20.00	C	1
SUN	22	CELEBRITY ASCENT	09.00	23.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

							8	6
1		2		9	8	7	5	
				2		3	9	
					2	8		3
			9		3	4		
3	2	5	8				6	
6	5	3		8		9	4	
	4	8	7			6	1	
		1			9	5		8

Difficulty: ★★ 3/17

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Answer to previous puzzle

8	6	9	4	7	1	5	2	3
5	7	3	2	9	6	4	8	1
1	2	4	3	8	5	9	6	7
3	1	5	8	4	9	2	7	6
2	4	7	6	5	3	8	1	9
9	8	6	7	1	2	3	4	5
7	9	8	5	6	4	1	3	2
4	3	1	9	2	7	6	5	8
6	5	2	1	3	8	7	9	4

Difficulty: ★ 3/16

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Ingredients of life discovered in Ryugu asteroid samples

Paris, France

All the essential ingredients to make the DNA and RNA underpinning life on Earth have been discovered in samples collected from the asteroid Ryugu, scientists said Monday.

The discovery comes after these building blocks of life were detected on another asteroid called Bennu, suggesting they are abundant throughout the Solar System.

One longstanding theory is that life first began on Earth when asteroids carrying fundamental elements crashed into our planet long ago.

The asteroids that hurtle through our Solar System give scientists a rare chance to study this possibility. In 2014, the Japanese spacecraft Hayabusa-2 blasted off on a 300-million-kilometre (185-million-mile) mission to land on Ryugu, a 900-metre-wide (2,950-feet-wide) asteroid.

It successfully managed to collect two samples of rocks weighing 5.4 grams (under a fifth of an ounce) each and bring them back to Earth in 2020.

Research in 2023 showed that these samples contained uracil, which is one of the four bases that make up RNA.

While DNA, the famed double helix, functions as a genetic blueprint, single-strand RNA is an all-important messenger, converting the instructions contained in DNA for implementation.

On Monday, a new study by a Japanese team of researchers in Nature Astronomy demonstrated that the samples contained all the "nucleobases" for both DNA and RNA.

These included uracil as well as adenine, guanine, cytosine and thymine.

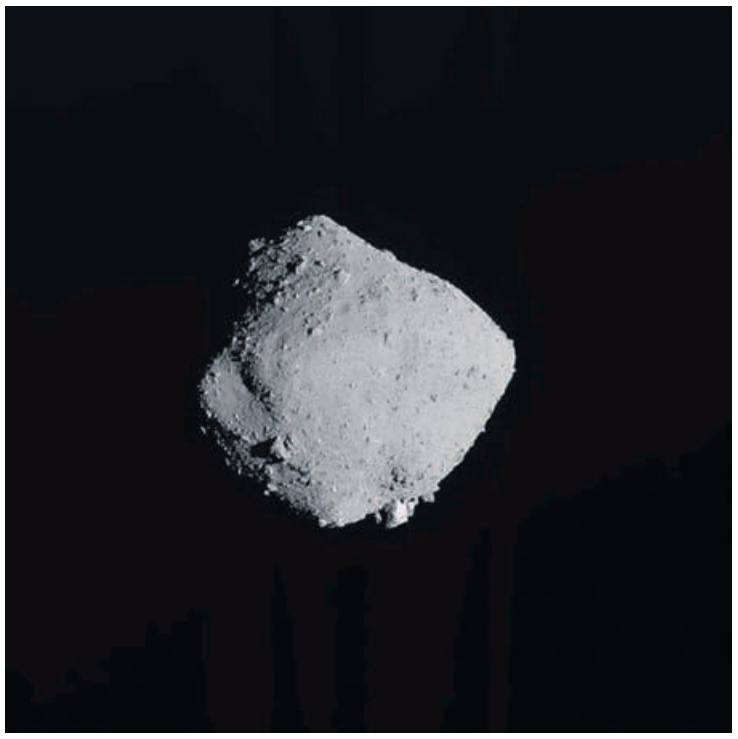
This "does not mean that life existed on Ryugu", the study's lead author, Toshiki Koga, told AFP.

"Instead, their presence indicates that primitive asteroids could produce and preserve molecules that are important for the chemistry related to the origin of life," added the biochemist from the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology.

The discovery also "demonstrates their widespread presence throughout the Solar System and reinforces the hypothesis that carbonaceous asteroids contributed to the prebiotic chemical inventory of early Earth," according to the study.

Cesar Menor Salvan, an astrobiologist at Spain's University of Alcala not involved in the research, emphasised that "these results do not suggest that the origin of life took place in space".

However, "with this and the results from Bennu, we have a very clear idea of which organic materials can form under prebiotic conditions anywhere in the universe," he added.



This handout photograph received by Jiji Press and taken by Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) on November 13, 2019 shows the asteroid Ryugu after Hayabusa2 departed its orbit around a distant asteroid and head for Earth. Japan's Hayabusa-2 probe left its orbit on November 13, 2019 after an unprecedented mission, carrying samples that could shed light on the origins of the Solar System.

- 'Unique' ammonia finding -

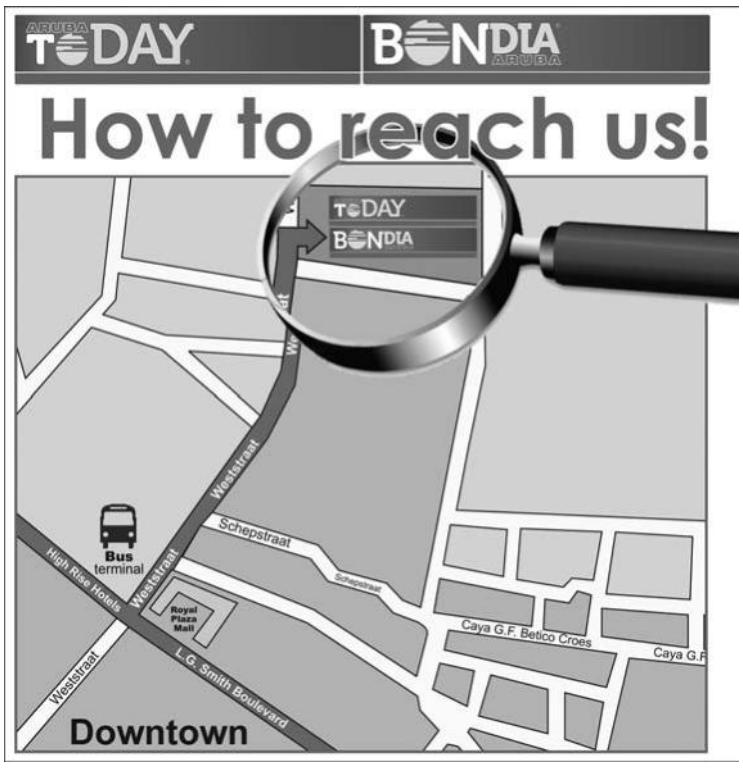
Last year, the same building blocks were found in fragments brought back to Earth by NASA from the asteroid Bennu.

Scientists have also detected their presence in the meteorites Orgueil and Murchison, which were part of asteroids that fell to Earth.

For the new research, the Japanese team compared the amount of each nucleobase detected in these different space rocks, finding the quantities varied depending on their history.

They also identified a correlation between the ratios of the building blocks and the concentration of another important chemical for life: ammonia.

"Because no known formation mechanism predicts such a relationship, this finding may point to a previously unrecognised pathway for nucleobase formation in early Solar System materials," Toshiki Koga said.❑



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Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
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Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional Tel. 583 5400

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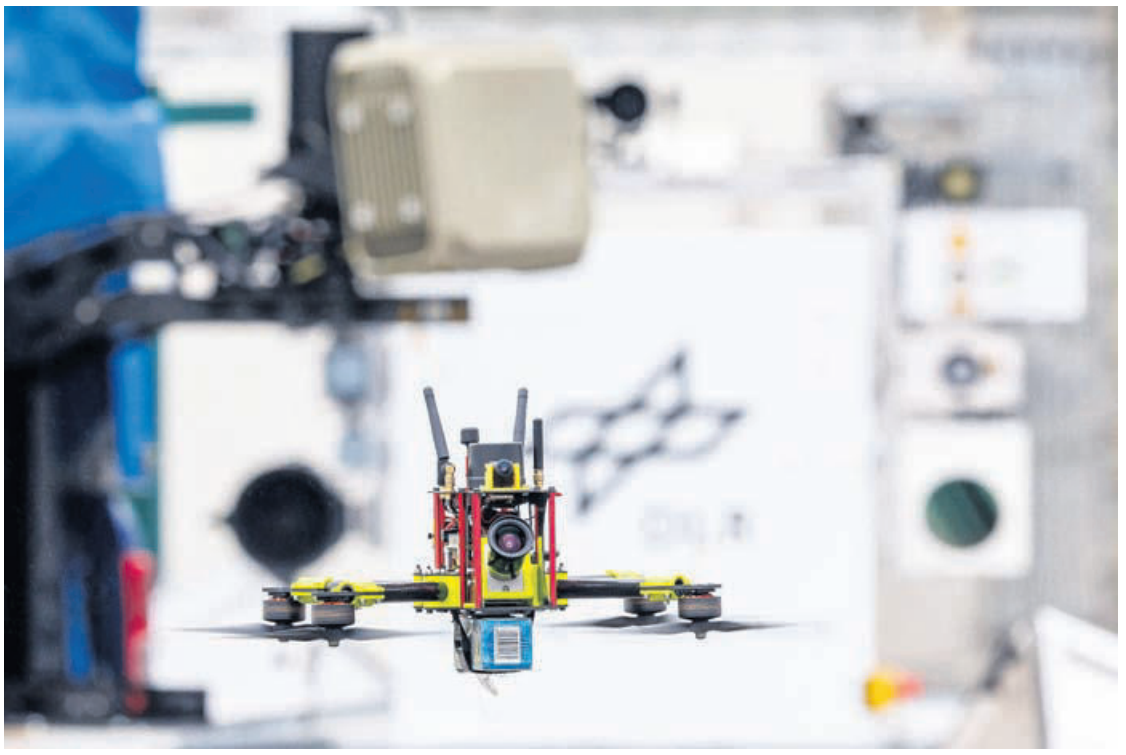
ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Rise of drone warfare sharpens focus on laser defense

New York, United States
The surge of drone use in conflicts worldwide, seen most vividly in the Ukraine and Middle East wars, will accelerate the race to develop high-power laser systems that could down the devices far more cheaply than traditional defensive weapons.
It is a critical issue for governments threatened by low-cost, easily obtainable drones that can wreak outsize destruction, and are usually shot down only by the most advanced -- and expensive -- missile technologies.
Currently, so-called directed energy weapons (DEWs) mounted to ships or armored vehicles can fire a concentrated electromagnetic beam at targets up to 20 kilometers (12 miles) away.
"Those systems have made a lot of progress in the last 10 to 15 years," said Iain Boyd, director of the Center for National Security Initiatives at the University of Colorado.
Russia is using several versions against drones from Ukraine, which is testing its own system, while Israel has deployed the Iron Beam technology from Rafael against drones fired by Lebanon's Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah.
However, the Israeli Army confirmed to The Jerusalem Post last week that Iron Beam was not being deployed in its current war with Iran, saying it was not ready for regular use.



A so-called hunter drone is seen in front of a mobile sensor unit for drone detection using optical systems and lasers at the National Test Centre for Unmanned Aerial Systems of the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) as part of a presentation of the 'CUSTODIAN' programme for drone defence in Cochstedt, eastern Germany on October 8, 2025.

China presented its LY-1 system last September, Britain and France are developing their own versions, and the United States has started equipping warships in particular, with Helios from Lockheed-Martin or the LWSD from Northrop Grumman.
"We have shown this technology has broad applicability including military operations and for homeland defense," Northrop told AFP in a statement.

- Pennies per shot? -
US President Donald Trump said recently that "the laser technology that we have now is incredible," and would soon replace the Patriot interceptor missile for taking out drones.
That would be music to the ears of military planners who are using the pricey Patriot and similar systems, where a single missile can cost millions of dollars, to down drones worth just several thousand dollars.
A top official in Britain's DragonFire program has estimated its per-fire cost at around 10 pounds ($13).
"The cost of firing one laser or microwave is really the cost of electricity," an expert in DEW systems design told AFP on condition of anonymity. After the initial investment is made, "it's going to be pennies per shot," the designer said.
At that price, not even Iran's notorious Shahed drones, estimated to cost as low as $20,000 each, or drone interceptors developed by Ukraine, whose costs start at around $700, can compete.
Other advantages include no launching device, the ability to modulate the beam's intensity, and unlimited "ammunition."
Billions of dollars have been invested in the technology, and in 2018 the US Navy ordered two DEW prototypes for around $75 million each.❑

AI to drive growth despite geopolitics, Taiwan's Foxconn says

Taipei, Taiwan
Taiwanese tech giant Foxconn on Monday said it expected the booming market for artificial intelligence servers to drive growth this year, despite volatility caused by global conflict.
Strong demand for AI hardware fuelled a 24 percent annual net profit jump last year for Foxconn, the world's largest contract electronics manufacturer.
Energy markets have been roiled by the war in the Middle East, raising concerns for big tech manufacturers, but company chairman Young Liu struck an upbeat tone at an earnings call with analysts.
"Over the past few months, there have been significant changes in tariffs, geopolitics, and global monetary policy," he said.
"However, driven by the strong growth of AI servers, I believe 2026 will still be a very good year, and we expect to see robust growth."
Foxconn also known by its official name Hon Hai Precision Industry has gone beyond assembling low-margin Apple iPhones to making AI servers for Nvidia along with electric vehicles and robotics.
It's a move that is paying off as tech firms worldwide race to spend big on training and deploying rapidly evolving AI systems.
In 2025, Foxconn's net profit came to NT$189.4 billion ($5.9 billion), up from NT$152.7 billion in 2024.
Revenue jumped 18 percent on-year to NT$8.1 trillion, the firm said, just beating the estimates of a Bloomberg survey of economists.

A man walks past a Foxconn signage and robots on display during the Hon Hai Tech day in Taipei on November 21, 2025.

- AI ambitions -
Sky-high tech share results and valuations worldwide have led to concerns of an AI market bubble that could eventually burst.
But Foxconn on Monday forecast "strong AI server demand" with "high double-digit quarter-on-quarter growth" expected for AI rack shipments in the first quarter of 2026.
Liu said the company wanted to become "the most trusted industrial platform of the AI era".
Cloud and networking services accounted for 40 percent of Foxconn's business portfolio in 2025, up from 30 percent in 2024.
Meanwhile, smart consumer electronics declined from 46 percent to 38 percent.
Huge global demand for memory chips to use in AI data centres has caused a shortage that is threatening higher prices for everyday gadgets.
"Everyone is concerned about memory shortages and related price hikes" fors smart consumer products, Liu said Monday.
But "since our product portfolio is mainly composed of higher-priced models, the impact we've observed so far has been relatively limited" while demand has not changed, he added.
Ahead of Monday's earnings release, Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Steven Tseng told AFP that for Foxconn, "so far the impact from the Middle East conflict appears largely manageable".❑

Record breaker Duplantis ready for return to 'special' Torun

Paris, France

Pole vault king Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis says he is raring to return to the site of his first world record this week, just days after raising the bar to a whopping 6.31 metres.

Duplantis sailed over that new mark in a meet in Uppsala, Sweden, on Thursday. It was the 15th world record he has set in an event he has totally dominated since coming onto the international stage.

His victory in Uppsala was his 38th consecutive victory in competition dating back to the summer of 2023.

The double Olympic gold medallist (2021, 2024) is also the three-time world outdoor champion (2022, 2023, 2025).

In addition, he is a three-time world indoor champ (2022, 2024, 2025) and heads to Torun, Poland, for this season's world indoors as firm favourite at a venue he knows well.

"Torun is a very special place for me since I broke my first world record there," Duplantis said on Sunday in reference to the 6.17m he cleared in February 2020 to better by 1cm Renaud Lavillenie's previous world best.

"I've been fortunate enough to break a few since then, but the first one's always a very life-changing moment.

"You go from, in one instance being not the world record holder, to the world record holder, which is one of my biggest childhood dreams."

The central Polish city that hosts the March 20-22 world indoors, was "a very special place for me as an athlete", Duplantis said.

"I'm just really excited for it, honestly, and especially after what I was able to do just now in Uppsala."

- Laser focus -

Since breaking the world record in Torun six years ago, Duplantis has single-handedly raised the bar, a demonstration of a stunning consistency that has seen him clear the 6.00m barrier for eight straight seasons over 79 competitions dating back to the 2018 European championships in Berlin.

But the 26-year-old, born in Louisiana to an American father and Swedish mother, insists he takes nothing for granted.

"You can never have too much of a hubris and be overconfident when it comes to sports, and you never can just underestimate your opponents," said Duplantis, who listed "Levels" by Avicii as his world record-breaking "anthem".

It also came down, he added, to respect for the art of pole vaulting, a field discipline demanding not only exceptional speed, strength and agility, but also a considerable level of technical nous.❑

Sweden's Armand Duplantis competes in the Men's pole vault event during the All Stars Perche international indoor athletics pole vaulting meeting in Clermont-Ferrand, central France, on February 22, 2026.

Gilgeous-Alexander keeps streak alive as Thunder down Wolves

Los Angeles, United States

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander kept his record-breaking 20-point scoring streak alive as the Oklahoma City Thunder rolled to an eighth straight win with a 116-103 defeat of the Minnesota Timberwolves on Sunday.

Gilgeous-Alexander, who on Thursday eclipsed Wilt Chamberlain's 63-year-old record for consecutive games of scoring 20 points or more, finished with 20 points, 10 assists and three rebounds.

Yet the reigning NBA Most Valuable Player left it late before reaching 20 points for the 128th game in a row, with 10 of his points coming in the fourth quarter after he spent long periods struggling for shooting accuracy.

Gilgeous-Alexander shot only 7-of-22 from the field but was given scoring support from the Thunder bench, who contributed 61 of Oklahoma City's points, including 20 from Isaiah Joe and 17 from Alex Caruso.

"At the end of the day it's basketball," Gilgeous-Alexander said of his lacklustre shooting display.

"I went out there with the same aggression I do every night. More shots didn't fall tonight than do, and usually that's not the case.

"But some nights go your way, some nights don't. But regardless, I feel like I contributed enough for our team to get the W (win) and that's first and foremost walking out of here with a win."

Sunday's victory helped the defending NBA champions extend their advantage at the top of the Western Conference standings heading into the final month of the regular season.

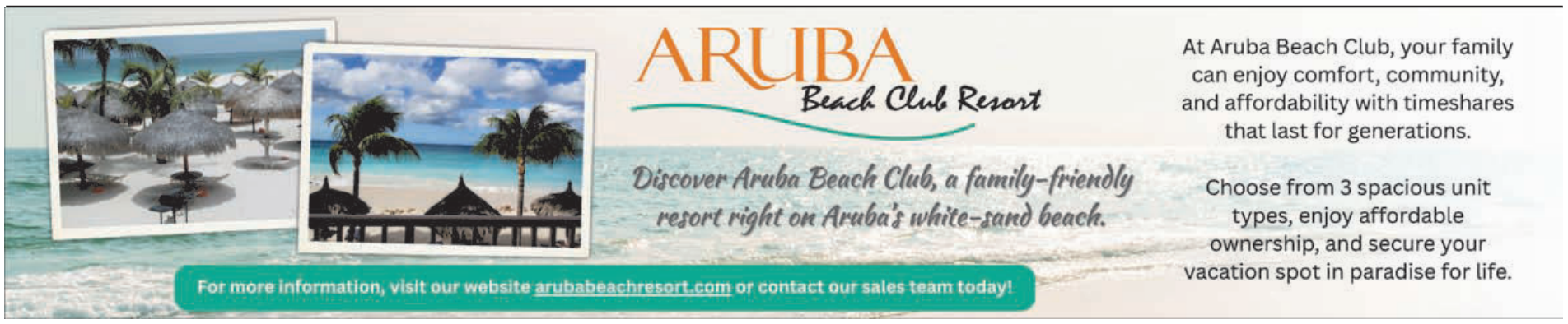
The Thunder are now 53-15, three-and-half games clear of the second-placed San Antonio Spurs (49-18).

Minnesota fell to 41-27 and remain in sixth place in the West.

Julius Randle led Minnesota's scoring with 32 points while Anthony Edwards added 19 and Ayo Dosunmu 18 from the bench.

Minnesota had won two of their three previous games against Oklahoma City this season and could have clinched regular-season bragging rights with victory.❑

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander #2 of the Oklahoma City Thunder handles the ball in front of Anthony Edwards #5 of the Minnesota Timberwolves during the second half at Paycom Center on March 15, 2026 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



Jannik Sinner of Italy hoists the championship trophy after defeating Daniil Medvedev during their Men's Singles Finals match on Day 12 of the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells Tennis Garden on March 15, 2026 in Indian Wells, California.

Sinner tops Medvedev to win first Indian Wells title

Indian Wells, United States

World number two Jannik Sinner surged home to beat Daniil Medvedev 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4) on Sunday to capture his first Indian Wells ATP Masters 1000 crown.

Four-time Grand Slam champion Sinner won his first title of 2026, rallying from 0-4 down in the second-set tiebreaker to seal the win against a resurgent Medvedev, winner of the title in Dubai last month who was riding a nine-match ATP winning streak.

That included an upset semi-final triumph over Carlos Alcaraz that ended the top-ranked Spaniard's 16-match winning streak to start the season.

But Sinner, who didn't drop a set in the tournament, proved just that bit better in a match where both sets went to the tiebreakers without a break of serve.

"I kept believing and kept pushing," Sinner said of his closing burst. "I went for my shots a little more. A third set, we would have started even, so I tried my best to close it out and I am very happy.

"It was an incredible ending," added Sinner, who said he wasn't troubled by the hot afternoon temperatures thanks to the lack of humidity and some extra days of pre-tournament preparation.

Sinner didn't face a break point in the one-hour 55-minute contest, winning 43 of the 47 points on which he put his first serve in play.

Medvedev saved the only two break points he faced in the seventh game of the opening set, but Sinner's tiebreaker prowess proved too much.

Medvedev was up 5-4 in the first-set tiebreaker when he let a ball sail by him and it landed in.

He'd go on to save one set point, but Sinner gave himself another with a blistering forehand that the Russian couldn't handle and pocketed the set with a thundering service winner.

Medvedev looked on track to level the match when he raced to a 4-0 lead in the second-set decider aided by Sinner's second double-fault of the match.

But Sinner roared home to join Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer as the only players to win all six of the ATP's hardcourt Masters 1000 tournaments.

"It feels amazing, great achievement," said Sinner, who was already turning his gaze to the Miami Open, the second leg of the "Sunshine Double" where men's first-round play begins on Wednesday.

"I have couple of days to relax (but) there is not so much time in between here and Miami ... we try to play the best tennis possible there, too."

- Bittersweet feeling -

Medvedev said the outcome was "bittersweet" after a semi-final victory over Alcaraz who beat him in the Indian Wells finals in 2023 and 2024 that felt like winning the tournament.

"But that's not the reality," he said. "There is a final to play. I had my opportunity, small opportunity in the first set. A bit bigger opportunity in the tiebreak in the second.❑